THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, April 21, 1800.

THE SYLPH;

OR,

THE HISTORY OF SOPHIA MERTON.

(Continued from Page 292.)

SKETCH OF A FAMILY.

MR. HARTFORD was about five and fifty years of age, of a lively unprincipled character; he poſſeſſed little religion or morality, and in his youth had paſſed through a ſeries of adventures, ſufficient to have furniſhed a Smollet with materials for a ſecond Roderick Random, or Count Fathom. Over moſt of theſe adventures it was his intereſt to draw a veil, but an impudent kind of vanity often drew that veil aſide. He had ſpent ſome time on the Continent, particularly in France, and his manners partook of the light frivolity, characteriſtic of that nation: his perſon had never been handſome, but a ſprightly air and infinity of ſmall talk made him be conſidered as a very pleaſant man, by women of a certain claſs of underſtanding. He had inſinuated himſelf into the good graces of two ladies poſſeſſed of conſiderable property, who became ſucceſſively Mrs. Hartford, and by theſe two marriages, and what is called ſome how or other, he became maſter of a tolerable fortune. Of late years, Mr. Hartford had led to the altar of Hymen, a widow whoſe name was Edwin: With this woman he had formed a criminal connection previous to the deceaſe of the ſecond Mrs. Hartford; and after introducing her to his

wife's acquaintance under a feigned character, eloped with and entirely reſided with her, rambling about various parts of the country, and paſſing ſometimes for huſband and wife; and many diſcreditable adventures occurred to them, as will be readily ſuppoſed in the courſe of their perigrinations. At length the death of the ſecond Mrs. Hartford enabled Mrs. Edwin to take the real ſituation ſhe had before aſſumed, and ſhe became the third wife of Hartford. This woman was much younger than her huſband, her perſon was ſhewy and genteel, which was ſet off to advantage by her great ſkill in dreſs: In her manners ſhe was cold and reſerved, and formed a ſtrong contraſt with the frivolity of Hartford; indeed, ſuperficial obſervers were often deceived by the ſerioufneſs of her behaviour, and led to ſuppoſe ſhe was an amiable woman united to a bad huſband; when, in fact, all the difference in their characters conſiſted in the one having a bad heart with gaiety, and the other a bad heart with gravity.

Mrs. Hartford had one ſon by her former marriage, and a brother of her's ſettled in one of the colonies, dying a ſhort time previous to her marriage with Hartford, bequeathed her, as his next heir, a tolerable little fortune, with the reverſion to her ſon. This fortune report magnified into ſix times the real ſum, and his mother having no child by her ſecond marriage, and Hartford none living by either of his, and no relatives that he ſaid any thing about, young Edwin, now five and twenty, was conſidered as their mutual heir. Edwin's education had been vilely conducted, or rather vilely neglected; no tender parent had encouraged the buds of virtue to germinate in his heart, or had eradicated the ſeeds of vice: He received a common grammar ſchool education; but to think and reaſon, to follow what was right and avoid what was wrong, was a leſſon left to chance; and chance had thrown vice in his way, and he had followed it before he knew what error was. The heart of Edwin was not a bad one, and as he advanced in life he could lament his faults, and bitterly execrate his ſhameful education: He was placed in a profeſſion from which he found it difficult to draw a tolerable ſupport; neither could he prevail on his mother and father-in-law to give him any other aſſiſtance than what the reſiding occaſionally at their houſe, on a pretty long viſit, now and then afforded him.

The ſylph having drawn the curtain, and diſcovered to his readers what this family really were, will now mention what they were ſaid to be on their ſettling in the town of Mellford.

" Mr.

" Mr. Hartford was a very gallant man, and a wonderful man for his years, ſo gay, ſo lively, ſomething ſo French in his manner; and then he played a good rubber of whiſt. Mrs. Hartford was a pretty woman as ſome ſaid, or a very genteel figure as others ſaid; and dreſſed ſo elegantly, and gave ſuch nice ſuppers, and the plate and china, and card boxes, and fiſh and counters, were ſo neat; and then ſhe played almoſt as good a rubber of whiſt as her huſband. And young Mr. Edwin was a genteel and rather pretty young man, though he did not talk much to be ſure, and was not quite ſo pleaſant a man as his father-in-law. And the Hartfords had a thouſand a year in the north, to which young Edwin was to be the heir."

On Hartfords really marrying Mrs. Edwin, they did not find it quite pleaſant to reſide very near the ſcene of any of their former adventures: They poſſeſſed ſome landed property, but for this and other reaſons found it ineligible to ſettle in its vicinity. A large town ſeemed to be the only reſidence where they were likely to be viſited by people of reſpectability, and where it was leaſt probable they ſhould be mortified by neglect. For provided people dreſs well, play a good rubber of whiſt, and give nice ſuppers, &c. the inhabitants of towns are in general much too ready to be amuſed and entertained, without being quite ſo inquiſitive as they ought to be, concerning the who and the what. This is not ſo eaſily brought about in a country reſidence, where the viſiting people may be divided into three claſſes: the ariſtocratical great man; the few country ſquires yet remaining, and the clergy; and thirdly, that new order of men, which this century has given birth to, and to whoſe exertions their country has lately owed ſo much, the gentlemen farmer. Great men (whatever bad company ſome of them mingle with in the circles of faſhion,) will not pay viſits in a decided manner, when reſiding at their country ſeats, to ſuch people as the Hartfords.

Country gentlemen, and thoſe of the clergy who move in their circle, connected by relationſhip and friendſhip with the firſt families of a county, will pauſe and heſitate, and make many enquiries, ere they incur the expence attendant on diſtant viſiting, merely to ſpend a few hours with dubious people. The clergy of ſmall incomes, equally well educated, and held up to view by their profeſſion with their richer brethren, will, very few of them, ſpend money they can ill afford, in order to introduce their wives and daughters to ſuch women as Mrs. Hartford. And laſtly, the proud

gentleman farmer will ſcarcely ſuffer his ſkilful groom, in a carter's frock, to bring forth the high mettled courſer for him to ride five or ſix miles in the rain or cold, to pay viſits to a man whoſe frivolity he deſpiſes, and whoſe ſmall talk he neither likes or underſtands.

Certain it is, that with all their advantages, cities and large towns are generally the reſidence of all thoſe kind of characters, which cannot bear a ſtrong light. This was preciſely the Hartfords' ſituation, who having tried one or two other places, ultimately fixed on Mellford for their abode, where they were much and generally viſited, with the exception of a few people, who thought rather deeper than their neighbours, and were leſs impoſed on by appearances. The ſylph cannot refrain from remarking, that in this very ſmall number was included the two ladies, Mrs. Byron, and Miſs Alton, of whoſe mental powers he has taken ſuch particular notice, and whom he has denominated the cenſors general of the genteel circles of Mellford.

A MORNING VISIT.

It was on a morning after a ball, at which my ward had attracted particular notice, that Mr. Edwin, who was her partner in the dance, waited on her, to enquire after her health, and alſo to make a ſerious declaration of a paſſion, all hints of which on the preceding evening ſhe had treated as ball-room gallantry. This young man, then on a viſit at his father-in-law's, frequently met Sophia in the gay parties of Mellford, and always diſtinguiſhed her by his aſſiduities; he hung over her chair at the card table; he was her partner at aſſemblies; and by very rapid degrees had aſſumed the appearance of a lover. Spoken of as the heir of large property, and by no means unpleaſing in his perſon, Sophia could not but regard him as ſomewhat of an important conqueſt; yet Auri, on examining her heart, found it not very ſtrongly attracted towards him: in truth, the manners of Edwin were rather thoſe which have nothing to diſpleaſe, united with an attentive ſoftneſs, than ſuch as intereſt the feelings and attract the heart.

Sophia was not totally unprepared for a declaration of love from her new admirer, which was made in very proper terms, excepting that he was not ſo explicit in ſpeaking of his property, income, and expectances, as every man of honour ought to be, on the opening of ſuch an affair. The fair ward of Auri received his declaration in a very proper manner,

referring

referring him to time and her friends for a decisive answer, and speaking of the absolute necessity of Mr. and Mrs. Hartford's entire approbation. At the same time hinting that her fortune was but very moderate, and even small, when compared with that to which he was heir. These hints he neither confirmed nor contradicted, but promised to mention the affair immediately to his mother and father-in-law, and on that condition was permitted by Sophia to solicit her friends' approbation of his visits; a permission he received with enthusiasm on his knees, and took the earliest opportunity of requesting the lady, under whose care Sophia was placed, to admit his visiting Miss Merton as a lover, who hoped his pretensions would be approved by all her relations and friends. This request was granted by the lady, on his assuring her his choice was entirely satisfactory to Mr. and Mrs. Hartford, and Edwin was allowed to attend Sophia Merton in the character of a declared lover.

(To be continued.)

Account of a Visit paid by Bettinelli, the Italian Poet, to Voltaire.

I Found the conversation of Voltaire, said Bettinelli, like his writings. The soul of epigram dwelled on his lips and sparkled in his eyes. They were two flambeaux; in which, as in his discourse, I saw, as it were, wit and malice beaming. He had a style peculiar to himself; and every sentence had either a pleasant or a philosophic turn.

When I arrived at Les Delices, he was in his garden. I approached, and told him my name.

"What!" exclaimed he, "an Italian! A Jesuit! A Bettinelli! The honour is too great for my cottage. I am a mere peasant, as you see, shewing me his garden tool; which was a hoe at one end, and a pruning knife at the other. With these I trim and hoe my garden, plant by plant; and my produce is much greater, than that of all the seed I have scattered through books for the good of humanity."

His singular and grotesque figure made a very unexpected impression on me. Under a black velvet cap, descending as low as his eyes, he wore a large wig, that covered three fourths of his face; which rendered his nose and chin more pointed and projected. His body was wrapt in a pelisse, from head to foot. His look and smile were abundantly expressive.

I testified

I teſtified the pleaſure I felt at finding him in ſuch good health; and thus able to brave the rigour of the ſeaſon.

"Oh, you Italians," replied he, "imagine we ought to bury ourſelves in holes, like the rats that inhabit the ſummit of theſe mountains, covered with ice and ſnow; but your Alps are to us no more than a beautiful perſpective view. On the banks of my lake Leman here, defended as I am from the north winds, I envy you not your lakes of Coma and Guarda. In this ſolitary abode, I live like Catullus in his little iſle of Sirmio. He produced charming elegies, and I good georgics."

Voltaire could never mention Italy, on which he beſtowed the moſt laviſh praiſe, without ſome ſatirical remarks on Italian ſlavery, the inquiſition, &c.

The converſation frequently turned on the King of Pruſſia. Information was brought him that, after a battle loſt, he had beaten the Duke Deux-ponts, had raiſed the ſieges of Nice and Leipſic, and had driven the Auſtrians into Bohemia. "Is it poſſible?" exclaimed Voltaire. "That man aſhoniſhes me continually. I am ſorry I have quarrelled with him." He admired in the King the rapidity of Cæſar; but his admiration always finiſhed with ſome epigram on Cæſar. He had a monkey that he called Luc, and he diverted himſelf with frequently giving this name to the King of Pruſſia. I expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe at this; and he anſwered, "Do you not ſee how my monkey bites every body, and then laughs?"

In 1760, at his own requeſt, I ſent him my remarks on ſome miſtakes that had eſcaped him in his Univerſal Hiſtory, relative to Italy and Italian literature. He returned me thanks, in a letter; but, as uſual, launching his thunder againſt the inquiſition, Italian ſlavery, Engliſh freedom, and the hypocriſy of the miniſtry of Geneva. His letter concluded with this paſſage:

"Have you heard of the poems of the King of Pruſſia? He, you will find, is no hypocrite. He ſpeaks of the Chriſtians as Julian once ſpoke. It ſhould ſeem that the Latin and Greek churches, headed by Soltikow and Daun, will immediately excommunicate him with cannon balls; but he will fight like a Devil in his defence. You and I know he will be damned: but we are not quite ſo ſure that he will be beaten."

I was frequently led to reflect on the fruitfulneſs of his mind, contraſted with the meagreneſs of his body. It is true, he often repeats what he had ſaid before; but this is

occaſioned by the extreme facility with which he writes. What author ever produced ſo many original things; many of them profoundly meditated, and all of them happily expreſſed?

I have ſometimes thought, that his ſlow and interrupted manner of ſpeaking was to gain time, till he could recollect ſomething which pleaſed him to ſay; for this manner was become habitual; ſo that, hearing him ſpeak, we might imagine he was reading one of his own works.

When converſing, he frequently mingled Italian phraſes, and quotations from Taſſo and Arioſto; but he never could forget his French accent. I one day teſtified my aſtoniſhment at the ill treatment he had beſtowed, in his Eſſay on Epic Poetry, on Arioſto, whoſe mind appeared ſo congenial with that of Voltaire. This produced a diſcuſſion, in which it was not difficult to prove, that the author of Orlando Furioſo was a great poet; that he did not deſerve to be treated as a mere jocoſe fantaſtic writer, and that his faults were the faults of his age, and not of his genius. Voltaire promiſed to read Arioſto again; and, in a new edition of his Eſſay, he has ſpoken of him with more propriety and juſtice.

He read ſome of my poems, and ſaid ſome very flattering things, particularly of the eulogiums I had written on the King of Pruſſia, Galileo, and Newton. He continued to declaim againſt ſuperſtition, the inquiſition, the Court of Rome, the Monkiſh orders, &c. and repeated what Cardinal Paſſionei ſaid to a traveller, "It is miraculous that the church has loſt nothing this year."

I one day went to dine with him, at his new ſeat at Ferney. After dinner, he ſaid, "I have eaten too much; I ſhall not live to inhabit my new purchaſe. But we muſt enjoy life. I am inclined to gormandize, and ſo was Horace; *trahit ſua quemque voluptas*. The child muſt be rocked till it falls aſleep."

You perceive he belonged to the Epicurean tribe; though in ſome reſpects he was a Diogenes. His wiſh was to be ſometimes Socrates, at others Ariſtippus. One day he would ſay he was dying; the next, that he was indebted to Tronchin for life and health, though in the ſame breath he would ridicule phyſic and the phyſician.

On the USE *of* WAX CANDLES.

THE reformation of religion greatly diminiſhed the uſe of wax candles, and likewiſe the practice of keeping bees.

bees.—In the caſtle of Wittenberg, and the church there, in which 900 maſſes were annually performed, 35,750lbs. of wax-lights were burned every year. In the time of the Dominican Flamma, at the commencement of the 14th century, wax-lights were unknown, and tallow-candles were conſidered an extravagant luxury. So late as the cloſe of the 14th century, wax-light was ſo dear in France, that it was held to be a very liberal and princely vow, when Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who began to govern that dutchy in the year 1361, offered to St. Anthony of Vienne for the reſtoration of the health of his ſick ſon, as much wax as the latter weighed. In the time of Frederick William, King of Pruſſia, the conſumption of wax-lights at his court was ſo great, that a quantity to the value of 6000 dollars annually was pilfered by ſervants, &c. without the depredations being obſerved. In January, 1779, 14,000 candles are ſaid to have been lighted at once for the celebration of a feaſt in the electoral palace at Dreſden, and in one night ſix hundred weight of wax was conſumed.

On the Means for procuring Paper in ſufficient Abundance, and at a reaſonable Price.

To the PRINTER,

SIR,

The preſent ſcarcity and dearneſs of paper are ſubjects of very ſerious and alarming concern. They threaten to check the diffuſion of knowledge among the poor, and entirely to ſuppreſs much important and literary communication. They already begin to deprive a very numerous and intelligent claſs of labourers of the means of ſubſiſtence. They tend to reduce all the publications of Britiſh literature to compilations and abridgements. They cannot, but in a certain degree, contribute to make both the exporting-book trade and the general literature of Britain, ſink into a ſtate of decline, in compariſon with thoſe of foreign nations.

It has occurred to me, that the following means may be uſefully employed to render paper, once more, cheap and plentiful among us.

I. Let the growth of flax, and the manufacture of thoſe cloths which are formed of it, be more attentively encouraged than they have lately been in Britain. It is, certainly, injudicious to abandon our linen manufacture for the ſake of cotton works. The want of rags for paper, is, perhaps, the leaſt of the evils which cannot but flow from this meaſure. The renewal and extenſion of our linen manufactures would,

though not immediately, yet in the end, furniſh that abundant ſupply of linen rags, of which the want ſo exceedingly enhances the preſent prices of our papers.

II. Our rags are not at all collected with ſufficient care, for the uſe of the paper manufacture. The manufacturers of paper could not do better than enter into ſome general agreement with the overſeers of the poor and the managers of charity work-houſes, throughout the iſland, by which the paper-makers ſhould be obliged to purchaſe at a certain rate, all the linen-rags which could be ſupplied to them; while, on the other hand, the overſeers, &c. ſhould engage to employ certain perſons from among the poor under their charge, in the conſtant collection of rags throughout all the diſtricts on the iſland. It cannot be doubted but a ſufficient quantity of rags might be procured for the manufacture of our papers, if due care were taken to collect them. But our paper makers have been, hitherto, content to depend for their raw materials on a ſupply from abroad. And the collection of linen-rags is a ſort of parſimony and of induſtry which the people of Britain have not yet ſufficiently learned.

III. Cotton rags, of which Britain certainly affords a ſufficient abundance, ought to be collected, ground down to ſufficient fineneſs, and employed, like thoſe of linen, in the manufacture of paper. Though leſs ſtrong and tenacious in the union of their fibres, cottons are, in truth, of the ſame elementary compoſition as flax. In the threads of flax there is indeed more of reſin, of cloſeneſs of ſtructure, of a filamentous conſiſtency. But in the manufacture, the diſadvantages of cotton as a material for paper, might be, in a great meaſure, overcome. Cotton rags are already employed in a certain proportion, in our Britiſh manufacture of paper, but not ſkilfully. Let them be uſed in a proportion much more conſiderable; and let it be endeavoured to attain to perfect ſkill in the preparation of them for this uſe.

IV. Flax or cotton, uſed directly as materials for paper, would, indeed, be too expenſive, It is only after they have been worn in cloth, that they can be afforded at a rate ſufficiently cheap. But there are many other ſubſtances, which are now applied to no uſe in the arts, and which would anſwer exceedingly well as materials for the manufacture of paper. The Chineſe prepare much of their paper from ſtraw: and why might not we imitate their example? The rind of the nettle, the inner bark of the birch tree,—the leaves of almoſt all ligneous plants, taken when dry, and not ſuffered to rot—may be ground down, bleached with oxy-

muriate of lime, and eaſily made into excellent paper. It is to be remembered, that the firſt paper was the manufacture of the Egyptians, from the leaves of a vegetable. Let the Society of Arts, the bookſellers and ſtationers of London, or any other eminent or munificent body of men, offer a very liberal premium for ſamples of paper made from ſtraw, leaves, or the rind of certain trees: Such paper will be eaſily furniſhed at a very cheap rate, and of excellent quality.

V. I do not believe, that there is ſufficient diligence uſed in bleaching ſuch coloured materials for paper, as are at preſent to be eaſily enough procured. Nor does it appear to me, that our Engliſh paper is made of the thinneſs and tenacity of texture which diſtinguiſh the paper of Germany. By the bleaching of coloured rags, and by making our common printing-papers thinner and of a leſs ſpongy conſiſtency; a conſiderable additional ſupply of the materials for paper might undoubtedly be commanded. Why ſhould not recourſe be had likewiſe to this meaſure?

Theſe, Sir, are the expedients which have ſuggeſted themſelves to me, for rendering our ſupply of papers more plentiful and more cheap.

Biographical Sketch of General George Waſhington.

By J. Morse, D.D.

Miniſter at Charleſtown, near Boſton, and Author of the American Geography.

THE late General Waſhington was born in the pariſh of Waſhington, Weſtmoreland county, in Virginia, February 22, 1732. He was the third ſon of Mr. Auguſtine Waſhington, a planter or farmer of reſpectable talents, diſtinguiſhed reputation, and a large eſtate in Virginia. The anceſtors of this gentleman, about the year 1657, removed from Yorkſhire, in England, to Virginia, and ſettled in King George's county, where, at the commencement of our revolution, the General had three brothers living, viz. Samuel, John, and Charles, all gentlemen of conſiderable landed property, and a ſiſter, the wife of Colonel Fielding Lewis.

The General was the firſt fruit of a ſecond marriage. His early education, conducted by a private tutor, under the direction of his father, was ſuch as favoured the production of an athletic and vigorous body, and the formation of a correct and ſolid mind. Inhaling a pure mountain air,

accuſtomed

accuſtomed to the healthful occupations of rural life, and to the manly toils of the chaſe, his limbs expanded to an unuſual, robuſt, but well proportioned and graceful ſize, adapted to endure the fatigues of his future life, and to ſuſtain the active energies of his noble ſoul.

By his tutor he was taught the rudiments of the Latin language, Engliſh grammer, and the elements of the mathematics. At the age of ten years his father died, and the charge of a numerous family devolved on his eldeſt brother, Mr. Lawrence Waſhington. This brother, a young gentleman of moſt promiſing talents, had a Captain's command in the colonial troops, employed againſt Carthagena, under Admiral Vernon. On his return from this expedition, he married the daughter of the Honourable William Fairfax, of Belvoir, and ſettled on his patrimonial eſtate, which he called Mount Vernon, in honour of his Admiral, from whom he had received many civilities. He was afterwards made Adjutant-General of the militia of Virginia, but did not long ſurvive his appointment. He left one daughter, who dying young, and his ſecond brother alſo having deceaſed without iſſue, the General ſucceeded to the family ſeat, and to a very conſiderable landed eſtate.

It is a circumſtance which ought not to be here omitted, that, at the age of fifteen, he was entered a midſhipman on board a Britiſh ſhip of war, ſtationed on the coaſt of Virginia, and his baggage prepared for embarkation; but his mother, then a widow, expreſſing her reluctance at his engaging in that profeſſion, the plan was abandoned.

The office of Adjutant-General, made vacant by the death of his brother, in conſequence of the extenſive limits of the province, was now divided into three diſtricts; and the future hero of America, before he had completed his twentieth year, began his military ſervice by a principal appointment in that department with the rank of a Major.

When he was little more than twenty years of age, an event occurred which called forth his great talents into public notice and exerciſe. In 1753, the French from Canada, aided by the Indians, whom they engaged for the purpoſe, made inroads and incroachments on the weſtern frontiers, along the Allegany and the Ohio rivers. Orders were received from England by Govenor Dinwiddie and the Counſel of Virginia, to repel by force theſe encroachments. It was howe ver thought a prudent preliminary ſtep, to make an effort to prevent open hoſtilities, by friendly and ſpirited remonſtrances to the French, and conciliatory overtures to the

Indians. Major Washington was deputed to undertake this important and perilous embassy. Accordingly he was dispatched by the Governor, with a letter to the Commander in Chief of the French, on the Ohio, complaining of the infractions of the treaties subsisting between the two crowns; and with instructions and plenary powers to treat with the Six Nations, and other tribes of Western Indians, and to secure their attachment to England. He commenced his journey late in October, with about fifteen attendants, and endured the fatigues, and performed the duties of his mission, with singular fortitude, industry, intelligence, and address When he returned with Monsieur de St. Pierre's answer, and gave information of his success in his negotiations with the Indians, he received the approbation and thanks of his country. His journal and report to Govenor Dinwiddie, which were published at the time, early announced to the world, that strength and correctness of mind, ease and manliness of style, and that judgment, method, and accuracy in doing business, which have since characterized him in conducting more arduous affairs. His journal for many years after, proved of essential service to travellers into that western wilderness.

Notwithstanding the remonstrances made by the government of Virginia to the French Commander on the Ohio, through Major Washington, hostile operations on that quarter were still continued, as part of a meditated plan of general attack upon the then British colonies. In this state of things, orders were received from the mother country, for the colonies to unite, and prepare to defend themselves. The assembly of Virginia took the lead; and early in the year 1754, voted a sum of money for the public service, and agreed to raise a regiment of 400 men for the defence of the frontiers of that colony. Mr. Fry, one of the professors of the college of William and Mary, was appointed Colonel of this regiment, and Major Washington, then about twenty-three years of age, received the commission of Lieutenant-Colonel. Colonel Fry died shortly after his appointment, and left his regiment and rank to the second in command.

Colonel Washington was now indefatigable in his efforts to form his regiment, to establish magazines, and open roads so as to pre-occupy the advantageous post at the confluence of the Allegany and Monongahela rivers (now Pittsburgh) which he had recommended for that purpose, in his report the preceding year. Impressed with the necessity of expe-

dition

dition in accompliſhing this important object, without waiting for a detatchment of independent regulars, and ſome companies of provincials from the neighbouring colonies, who were expected to join him, he commenced his march in the month of May.

On his way, at a place called Red Stone, he met a ſtrong party of French and Indians, whom he engaged and routed, after killing and capturing fifty of the enemy. Among the priſoners was the celebrated Monſieur de la Force, and two other officers, from whom Colonel Waſhington received intelligence, that the French forces on the Ohio, conſiſted of upwards of 1000 regulars, and ſeveral hundred Indians, and that they had already erected a fort at the poſt he had intended to occupy, which they called Fort du Queſne. Upon this intelligence, he took his ſtation with his little army, at a place called Great Meadows, for the conveniency of forage and ſupples, where he built a temporary ſtockade to cover his forces, and named it Fort Neceſſity. Here he waited the arrival of expected ſuccours from New York and Pennſylvania, but was joined by Captain M'Kay's regulars only, which increaſed his force to about 400 effective men. He remained unmoleſted till July, when he received information from his ſcouts, that a conſiderable party of the enemy was approaching to reconnoitre his poſt; he ſallied and defeated them; but in return was attacked by an army of French and Indians, computed to have been 1500 ſtrong, under the command of the Sieur de Villiers. The little garriſon made a gallant defence of ſeveral hours, during which they killed nearly 200 of the enemy, and more than one third of their own number were either killed or wounded. The French commander, diſcouraged by ſuch bold oppoſition, propoſed a parley, which terminated in an honourable capitulation. Colonel Waſhington, at the head of his troops, quitted the fort with the honours of war, agreeable to the articles of capitulation, and carried with him his military ſtores, and baggage; but the French commander, either unable or unwilling, did not reſtrain his Indian auxiliaries from plundering the provincials, and making a conſiderable ſlaughter of men, cattle, and horſes. After this diſaſter, the remains of the Virginia regiment returned to Alexandria to recruit.

(To be continued.)

ACCOUNT

ACCOUNT *of a* POETICAL COLLIER.

" Ah me ! full ſorely is my heart forlorn,
" To think how modeſt worth neglected lies ;
" While partial fame does with her blaſts adorn
" Such deeds alone as pride and pomp diſguiſe."

SHENSTONE.

THAT the adventitious circumſtances of local ſituation may often tend to call forth the earlieſt exertions of poetical genius, is a propoſition too evident to ſtand in need of any illuſtration. Theſe may undoubtedly be regarded as the principal ſource of that reliſh for metrical compoſition, which pervades the inhabitants of that part of Dumfrieſhire which extends along the banks of the Eſk, a river immortalized in the ſtrains of Mickle. The verdure of the meadows ; the woods that rear their green heads in every direction ; the pellucid ſtreams that deſcend from the ſides of a thouſand hills ; the continual and varied ranges or picturesque mountains that bound the horizon ;—all conſpire to awaken in the mind of the beholder an enthuſiaſtic regard for the romantic ſcenes of nature. This admiration almoſt neceſſarily leads to a fondneſs for that art which profeſſes to pourtray her ſimple beauties. Hence the origin of that poetical enthuſiaſm, which diſcovers itſelf in almoſt every paſtoral country.

The inhabitants of Eſkdale and the adjacent diſtricts have, at leaſt, for ſeveral centuries, been diſtinguiſhed by a taſte for poetry. Many ballads which celebrate their exploits in the free-booting times, are ſtill extant.

It was in this diſtrict that Mickle and Armſtrong were born ; and here, likewiſe, did the ingenious Ruſſel ſpend the evening of his life.

Perhaps the people in general are more enlightened than the reſt of their countrymen. They are fond of reading; and almoſt every ſhepherd has a collection of books. The ſmall town of Langholm is moreover provided with a circulating library, to which they can have acceſs for a trifling conſideration. They have frequent recourſe to dramatic repreſentations : and although it cannot be ſuppoſed, that they are firſt-rate performers, yet they have occaſionally exhibited the Gentle Shepherd with tolerable ſucceſs. The profits are always applied to the beſt of purpoſes.

Poets have appeared amongſt them in almoſt every ſtation of life : they can even furniſh an inſtance of a poetical col-

lier; a circumſtance unprecedented in the annals of literature. The Muſes have often deigned to viſit the huſbandman at his plough, and the ſhepherd tending his flocks on the lonely mountain: but never before have they ventured down the palpable obſcure, in order to grope for a votary in the coal-mines. For many years has William Wilſon, after his daily reſurrection, devoted his leiſure hours to the ſtudy of poetry; nor has misfortune ever been able to ſuſpend his exertions. The rude hand of adverſity has often been extended to blaſt his happineſs; but he ſtill defies her frowns, and laughs at all her efforts.

His original occupation was that of a petty farmer. He rented a few acres of ground, which he cultivated with his own hands. His labours were not crowned with ſucceſs; his affairs ſoon went into confuſion, and his creditors ſeized upon the whole of his effects. He then ſought employment as a daily labourer; and ſoon after engaged himſelf as a collier. In the meanwhile misfortunes crowded faſt upon him; he was aſſailed by every evil which poverty could inflict; his wife languiſhed in diſtreſs for upwards of ten years; and to cloſe the mournful catalogue, his numerous family followed each other to the grave, till only two were left. For the loſs of theſe, he felt as a man ſhould feel; but the change of fortune did not in the leaſt damp the ardour of his mind. As a practical philoſopher, he is even to be preferred to Epictetus himſelf. His happy diſpoſition ſoon enables him to riſe ſuperior to every freſh calamity. He is always cheerful and contented, although his poverty is ſometimes ſo extreme, that he cannot procure himſelf the neceſſaries of life.—The following authentic anecdote will at once illuſtrate his indigence as a man, and his talents as an *improviſatore*.

As the coal-works with which he is concerned, lie at a conſiderable diſtance from his cottage, he is accuſtomed to take a ſupply of victuals along with him in the morning. One day, however, it happened that both his money and proviſions were entirely exhauſted; and when his fellow-labourers began to regale themſelves, poor William laid himſelf down beſide them in a very contented manner. But one, more generous than the reſt, commiſerated his ſituation, and offered him a ſhare of his dinner, provided he would ſay a good grace. Having accepted the propoſal, he pulled off his hat; and after a momentary rumination, very devoutly pronounced the following ſtanzas:

God

God bleſs the meat and bleſs the man,
And let him ne'er be ſcant;
Wha thus wi' liberal heart and han',
Gi'es bread to them that want.

Wi' plenty may his pantry flow;
Let plenty never ceaſe,
Till Carſon claw an auld man's pow,
And end his days in peace.

His poetical talents do not conſtitute his ſole claim to merit: in ſocial life he is poſſeſſed of many endearing qualities.

Prompted by curioſity, I once paid a viſit to this untutored bard. When I entered his dwelling, he and his family were ſitting at a ſcanty meal. Though we were entire ſtrangers to each other, he invited me to partake of their repaſt with all the frankneſs of eſtabliſhed friendſhip. I willingly accepted the invitation.—It was the banquet of old Arcadia. At my requeſt he afterwards, in a very agreeable manner, ſung a ſimple air of his own compoſition. He told me, that he generally finiſhed his little pieces at one ſitting, and that he ſeldom or never ſubmitted to the labour of ſubſequent correction.

Such are the ſhort and ſimple annals of William Wilſon, a man whoſe dignity of mind exalts him far above his ſtation. It is melancholy thus to behold ſuch a man languiſhing in the extremity of indigence. Shall no generous hand afford him relief? Shall the rays of benevolence never illuminate his obſcure dwelling? Meek-eyed benevolence! unleſs thou haſt forſaken the boundaries of the gay, the opulent city, and fled to the peaſant's lonely cottage, thy timely aid is not now ſolicited in vain.* And aſſuredly thou ſhalt never have any cauſe to regret thy having contributed to throw, at leaſt, a temporary luſtre over the declining years of this humble votary of the Muſes.

London. D. J.

* This alludes to a private ſubſcription which is now ſet on foot.

A REFLECTION.

TO lengthen the miſery of the dumb creation by wantonneſs, is diſgraceful to the character of a being calling himſelf rational.

SINGULAR

SINGULAR CUSTOMS.

BY the *Charta Foreſtæ* we find that before that time to kill one of the King's deer was puniſhed with the loſs of life or limb, at the ſame time that a murderer paid only a weregild, or was entitled to benefit of clergy.

FROM Crantz's account of Greenland we learn that the Greenlanders ſhew their reſentment for injuries by giving their adverſaries notice, that they will, at a particular day, publickly recite a libel againſt them; and it is reckoned a want of ſpirit if the adverſary does not give a fluent anſwer. What barbarians! not to have recourſe to duelling.

Anſwer, by J. Commins, of Taviſtock, to his own Rebus, inſerted October 9, 1797.

THE meaning not able to ſtumble upon
Of this rebus, my friend—'tis the SINE QUA NON.

Anſwer, by P. Gove, of Exeter, to W. Bickham's Charade, inſerted January 27.

YE ſluggards view the induſtrious BEE,
In it a pattern you may ſee,
To improve each fleeting hour;
How ſwiftly to the HIVE it flies,
Full loaded with the luſcious prize,
Cull'd from each herb and flower.

*** We have received the like anſwer from R. Andrews, and J. King, of Kingſbridge; R. Thomas, W. Hobbs, and T. Whicker, of Exeter; George Coulman, of Broadhempſton; J. R. Toulmin; P. Ninnis, and J. Ninnis, of St. Auſtell; T. Jarvis, of Malborough; G. England, of Uplyme; Serjeant Aſh, of the Exminſter Volunteers; R. Towning, of Fivehead; and T. Churchouſe, of Yeovil.

An ANAGRAM, *by R. Thomas, of Exeter.*

TO wound, if you tranſpoſe with care,
A Scripture name will then appear.

A REBUS, *by R. Thomas, of Exeter.*

YE generous youths! pray muſe awhile
On my rebuſian lore;
My firſt is what moſt men deſire,
And what they oft adore.

Not all who do my firſt poſſeſs
Can of my next partake;
It yields relief to troubled minds,
And peace with them will make.

'Tis thee my next that is the cauſe
Of envy in the breaſt;
Thy direful pow'r o'er all mankind
Is known in guilt to reſt.

Did all improve my fourth aright
'Twould happineſs impart;
By it is clos'd the ſcenes of life,
And near connections part.

My next is what great George our King
May juſtly call his right;
Long may he reign on Britain's throne,
And give each heart delight!

Behold! my lovely next appears
When war and tumults ceaſe;
Here may its beauties ſoon diſplay,
An emblem bleſt of peace!

But oh! now view my noiſy next,
When on the raging tide!
'Tis this which does the mariner
Diſtreſs on every ſide.

That beauteous nymph ye bards now find,
The goddeſs of the ſea;
Of Doris ſhe the daughter was,
And will my laſt diſplay.

Ye ſapient youths! thoſe eight define,
Th' initials join'd will cauſe
A warrior's name to come to view
Deſerving great applauſe.

POETRY.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

On QUITTING a FAVOURITE COUNTRY RESIDENCE.

ADIEU! ye hills and ye vales!
Where infancy ſported his days;
When fancy recounted her tales,
And every thought was at eaſe.

Ye meadows, ye woods, and ye lawns!
Your flocks, and your ſweet-ſinging birds;
Your goats, and your ſtags, and your fawns,
Adieu! and ye bellowing herds.

The garden where blooms the red roſe,
Where bees cull the ſweets of each flower;
Where the jeſſamine ſtauntingly grows,
And twines rounds the green-willow bower.

The orchard, Pomona's chief care,
When trees bend with fruit to the ground;
The grape, and the plumb, and the pear,
Than are your's no better are found.

How often to viſit your charms
Have I walk'd on a hot ſummer's day?
And in winter thro' froſt and thro' ſtorms,
When the ſun could not cheer with his ray.

But now comes the winter's bleak froſt,
The ſpring that enlivens the mind;
Both theſe, and the ſummer are loſt,
And in autumn no pleaſure I find.

No joys has the country for me,
And the city produces but pain:
Oh! I wiſh that my fate would decree,
"Thoſe pleaſures you'll viſit again."

M. B.

Exeter, March 29, 1800.

DESCRIPTION *of* HUNTING.

[From Miſcellanies by the late J. H. Beattie, A. M. Son of the ingenious Dr. Beattie.]

BRIGHT rays of purple fire the ſky,
And gild the ſhivering ſtream,

Beyond

Beyond the weſtern miſt on high
While the gay woodlands gleam.

Hark! how the voice of hounds and horn
Floats in the fragrant gale;
Along the ruſſling thicket borne,
And down the ſhadowy vale.

They paſs; nor fancy's modeſt ear
The ſhouting train purſues;
No ſcreams of bloody triumph cheer
The ſolitary muſe.

Ye, whoſe victorious arts beguile
The ſufferer of its breath,
Who watch, with fierce unthinking ſmile,
The languid throbs of death;

Haſte, let your harmleſs captives bleed:
Ye too muſt fall as they;
Death, on a ſwift tho' noiſeleſs ſteed,
Purſues you as his prey.

Nor yet prolong the victim's woe
In lingering terror driven:
Kill, do not torture; mercy ſhow,
And mercy hope from Heaven.

Lines on a little Girl burſting into Tears upon reading the Story of the Babes in the Wood.

AS the ſad tale, with accents ſweet,
The little ruby lips repeat,
Soft pity feels the tender breaſt
For infant innocence diſtreſt.

The boſom heaves with riſing woe;
Short and confus'd the pauſes grow;
Brimful the pretty eye appears,
And burſts at laſt—a flood of tears.

Sweet ſoftneſs! ſtill, Oh! ſtill retain
This ſocial heart, this ſenſe humane:
Still kindly for the wretched bleed,
And no return of pity need.

In plenty flow thy days and eaſe,
Soft pleaſures all conſpire to pleaſe;
Long may a ſire's affection bleſs,
And long a mother's tenderneſs.

And thou, oh bard! whoſe artleſs tongue,
The ſadly pleaſing ſtory ſung,
With pride a power of moving own,
No tragic muſe has ever known.

Compleat is thy ſucceſs at laſt;
The throng admir'd in ages paſt;
Prais'd lately Addiſon thy lays,
And nature's ſelf now deigns to praiſe.